2.

A

CHARITABLE VISIT;

OR,

CHRISTIAN CONSOLATIONS

FOR A

WIFE,

WHO MOURNS FOR

THE LOSS OF HER HUSBAND.

BEING A

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN A

MINISTER AND THE PERSON AFFLICTED.

WRITTEN ORIGINALLY IN FRENCH,

BY THE

REV. CHARLES DRELINCOURT,

AND

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH FROM HIS BOOK,

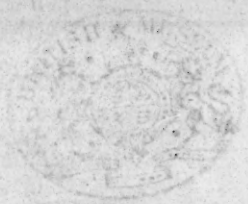
ENTITLED,

LES VISITES CHARITABLES.

Thy Maker is thy husband. Is. liv. 5.

Remember Lot's wife. Luke xvii. 32.

GLOCESTER:
PRINTED BY R. RAIKES.
AND SOLD BY T. EVANS, PATER-NOSTER-ROW, LONDON;
AND EVANS AND HAZELL, GLOCESTER.
M.DCC.LXXXV.



CONSOLATIONS

FOR A

WIFE,

WHO MOURNS FOR THE

LOSS OF HER HUSBAND.

Miniſter.

MY ſiſter, I have heard what great affliction hath happened to you; and I am come to tell you how much concerned I am for it, and to pray for you, that God would comfort and ſtrengthen you in this great trial.

Widow. My ſorrow is ſo great, that I cannot find words ſtrong enough to repreſent it to you. I believe there is not a woman in the

world ſo afflicted as I am. Pray, Sir, excuſe my ſighs, and the tears you ſee me ſhed.

M. Far from condemning your ſenſibility, I find it very reaſonable. The leaſt a virtuous wife can do is to ſhed tears over the grave of ſo worthy a huſband.

W. Your compaſſionating my ſorrow, and not diſapproving of my tears, is, I aſſure you, Sir, a great conſolation to me: for ſome perſons are ſo deſtitute of humanity, and of ſo ſavage a temper, that they cannot bear I ſhould grieve and cry. Such people, inſtead of alleviating, do but aggravate and increaſe my ſorrow.

M. A perſon muſt have very little compaſſion, not to be affected with your loſs, and be very unreaſonable to blame you for weeping. God has not given us hearts of ſtone. He does not require a barbarous inſenſibility from us; on the contrary, when he ſtrikes, he is willing we ſhould feel the blow, and make it profitable to ourſelves. Jeſus, the ſon of Sirach, far from condemning, excites us to weep for the dead. *My ſon*, ſays he, *let tears fall down over the dead.* If we are allowed to weep for the dead in general, how much more may a Chriſtian, and a virtuous wife, ſhed tears over the tomb of her huſband? When the Holy Scriptures

Ecc. xxxviii. 16.

Scriptures give us a deſcription of a great calamity, they repreſent to our minds the idea of a perſon, who is weeping for the dead. Thus we read, that after Joab had ſent to Tekoa, and fetched thence a woman well ſkilled in acting a part to counterfeit grief before King David, he ſaid to her, *I pray thee* 2Sam. xiv. 2 *feign thyſelf to be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyſelf with oil, but be as a woman that hath a long time mourned for the dead.* The antient Patriarchs mourned for their dead, and were not reproved for it. Thus Gen. xxiii. 2 we read, that Abraham *wept for his wife*; that Joſeph *wept upon his* Ib. l. 3. *father's face*, and that all Iſrael

mourned

nourned for him ſeveral days; that
ll the houſe of Iſrael mourned a long Num. xx. 29
ime for Aaron the High Prieſt;
hat they did the ſame for the death 1 Sam. xxv. 1.
of the Prophet Samuel; and that
ot only *all Judah and Jeruſalem* 2 Chron xxxv 24.
nourned for King *Joſiah*, but that
he Prophet Jeremiah ſhed a flood Lament. iv. 20.
of tears over his grave, and made
hat in part the ſubject of his book
of Lamentations. It is not only in
he Old Teſtament, but alſo in the
New, that you find inſtances of
mourning for the dead. When
Jairus's little daughter died, the Matt. ix. 23.
whole houſe was in tears; and they
had even players on mournful in-
ſtruments to excite their grief. We
read alſo in St. Luke, that a wi-
dow

dow followed her ſon to the grave
Luke vii. 12, 13. *weeping*, and that Jeſus Chriſt *had compaſſion on her*. When Dorcas died, the Diſciples at Lydda ſent for St.
Acts ix. 39. Peter, and *brought him into the upper chamber*, where the corpſe was, *and all the widows ſtood by him weeping, and ſhewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made* to cloathe the poor. When St. Stephen, the firſt martyr of Chriſt, was ſtoned,
Ib. viii. 2. *they made great lamentation over him.* When *Lazarus* died, not only his ſiſters and friends wept for him, but our Saviour himſelf came to his grave and *wept*; which made the
John xi. 35, 36. Jews ſay, *Behold how he loved him.* If this compaſſionate and merciful Saviour did weep for his friend,

whom

whom he was going to raiſe from the dead, can you imagine he will diſapprove our weeping for the death of *our* friends, who ſhall not be raiſed from the dead till the laſt day? And is it likely he ſhould be diſpleaſed at the tears of a widow, who weeps for her huſband? Nay more: God would have us look upon it as a ſign of his wrath, even of his great wrath, when we are not lamented after our death: for when he was foretelling the dreadful judgments and calamities, which he intended to ſend upon the Jews, he ſays by his Prophet, *They ſhall die of grievous deaths, they ſhall not be lamented.* And a little after, *Thus ſaith the Lord,* Jer. xvi. 4, 5.

enter not into the house of mourning, neither go to lament, nor bemoan them: for I have taken away my peace from this people, saith the Lord, even loving kindness and mercies. And after he has foretold the dreadful punishments he would inflict on the enemies of his people, he adds,

Jer. xxv. 33 *The slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth, even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground.* This is what had been particularly foretold of Jehoiakim, King of Judah, as a punishment for his impiety. *There-*

Ib. xxii. 18. *fore, thus saith the Lord, concerning Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, king of*

f Judah, they ſhall not lament for im, ſaying, Ah, my brother, or ah ſter; they ſhall not lament for him, aying, Ah, lord; or ah, his glory! But, my ſiſter, here is a thing that omes ſtill nearer to your caſe: hich is, that the Holy Spirit par-icularly ſets it down among the arks of God's indignation, that hen men die either a natural or a iolent death, their widows make o lamentation for them. Hear hat Job ſays, *This is the portion* Job xxvii. 13, 14, 15. *f a wicked man with God, and the eritage of oppreſſors, which they all receive of the Almighty: If his ildren be multiplied, it is for the ord; and his offspring ſhall not be tisfied with bread. Thoſe that re-*

main of him ſhall be buried in death; and his widows ſhall not weep. But nothing can be added on this ſubject, to what the Prophet ſays in the ſeventy-eighth Pſalm; where, deſcribing the extreme calamity of the people of God, he expreſſes himſelf thus, *Their prieſts fell by the ſword; and their widows made no lamentation.* This *Theodore Beza** has very well expreſſed in theſe verſes, the ſtile of which is not ſo elegant, as the ſenſe is admirable:

Pſ. lxxviii.

The grief of widows is ſo deep,
That they have no time to weep.

---

* See Beza's character deſcribed in Moſheim's *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, vol. iv. p. 78 and 118, 8vo. edition, London, 1768.

I have mentioned all this to ſhew you that true religion does not extinguiſh the feelings of nature; and that thoſe, who condemn your tears, are unreaſonable.

W. Sir, if all widows have juſt cauſe to be afflicted, and to mourn for their huſbands, I think I have more than any other. Therefore, as I am grieved from the very bottom of my ſoul, and weep day and night, it is impoſſible I ſhould receive any comfort; and I believe there will be no end of my tears, but with my life.

M. You go beyond the bounds of a rational grief. A diſcreet Chriſtian widow ſhould not indulge it

it to ſuch exceſs. What I have hitherto ſaid to you, was by way of excuſe for the firſt emotions of nature; and in order to ſhew you that thoſe, who condemned you for weeping, when God had ſeparated you from ſo dear and excellent an huſband, had no great degree of compaſſion, and did concern themſelves but little in their neighbour's ſufferings: but my intention was not to give a ſanction to an obſtinate grief, and encourage an exceſſive flow of tears. St. Paul does not forbid us abſolutely to mourn for the death of our friends, but he does not allow us to be ſorry, *even as others which have no hope.* There are three principal things, which

1 Theſſ. iv. 13.

which ought to aſſuage your grief, and wipe away your tears. The firſt is, the conſideration of God's Providence, that not even a ſparrow *falleth on the ground without* the will of *your* heavenly *father*; for *the very hairs of your head are all numbered.* The ſame wiſe and adorable Providence takes particular notice of the life and death of men, but much more of the children of God: ſo that we may ſay* to the king of terrors, as our Saviour once did to Pilate, *Thou couldſt have no power at all againſt me, except it were given thee from above.* The ſecond thing, which

Matt. x. 29 30.

John xix. 11

* *Dire à la Mort.---Say to Death.*

ſhould

ſhould free our minds from that deep melancholy, which overwhelms thoſe who give way to it, is the conſideration of the happineſs and glory, which thoſe ſouls enjoy, whoſe abſence we regret. The third and laſt thing, which ought to be matter of the greateſt comfort to us, is the hope we have, that when our ſouls leave the body, God will raiſe them to the ſame glory and felicity, which the perſons we loved are poſſeſſed of, and that their bodies and ours will one day be raiſed to a ſtate of incorruption and immortality: for when

2 Theſſ. i. 7 10. *the Lord ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, to be glorified in his ſaints, and to be admired*

ired in all them that believe, he will hange our vile body, that it may be aſhioned like unto his glorious body. Philipi. iii. 21.

his paſſage, now quoted from t. Paul, contains the ſame grounds f comfort, which the Apoſtle gives s in the fourth chapter of his firſt piſtle to the Theſſalonians; where, aving expreſſed himſelf thus, *I* 1 Theſſ. iv. 13. *ould not have you to be ignorant, rethren, concerning them which are leep, that ye ſorrow not, even as hers which have no hope,* he adds, *or if ye believe that Jeſus died, and* Ib. 14. *ſe again, even them ſo alſo, which ep in Jeſus, will God bring with m. For this we ſay unto you by the* Ib. 15. *ord of the Lord, that we which are ive and remain unto the coming of*

the Lord, ſhall not prevent them
1 Theſſ. iv. 16. *which are aſleep: for the Lord him-*
ſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with
a ſhout, with the voice of the archan-
gel, and with the trump of God; and
the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt:
Ib. 17. *then we, which are alive and remain,*
ſhall be caught up together with them
in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the
air: and ſo ſhall we ever be with the
Lord. Hence the Apoſtle concludes
that true believers ſhould hereby
learn to comfort themſelves for the
death of thoſe perſons, who were
Ib. 18. moſt dear to them. *Wherefore,* ſays
he, *comfort one another with these*
words.

W. Alas, Sir, how is it poſſible
to be comforted for the loſs of ſuch

huſband! I believe there was not a better or more virtuous man in the world, nor one in whom a more ſhining zeal and greater piety could be ſeen. Never did a huſband ſhew more love and tenderneſs to his wife. He kindly bore with my failings, and ſtudied to pleaſe me in all things. His goodneſs was ſuch, that he generally prevented my deſires, and anticipated all my wiſhes.

M. If you had loſt a man of no uncommon merit, you might eaſily comfort yourſelf; and if you had loſt one of a wicked and debauched character, it would not be wiſe in you to lament your loſs: for, I believe, there is not a perſon more

miſerable, or more to be pitied, than a wiſe and virtuous woman, who has a vicious and extravagant huſband. It is like the puniſhment among the ancient Pagans, who uſed to bind a dead to a living body. This may be ſaid to be ever a more cruel and inſupportable torment: for, beſides that the infection of a wicked mind, which overflows with vice, is incomparably a worſe conſequence than that of a dead corpſe, the living being bound to a dead body, ſoon dies by the ſtench and corruption of the other; whereas, a virtuous woman, when married to a vicious man, who is *dead while he liveth*, muſt for years perhaps, ſuffer the odiouſneſs of

h

his bad life, endure his infamous talk, his blaſphemies and impiety, and be expoſed to all the tranſports of his rage and cruelty: but when God is pleaſed to take a good and kind, a mild and peaceable huſband to himſelf, one who was of an exemplary piety, this is an excellent means of exerciſing a widow's virtue: then ſhe ought to ſhew the improvement ſhe has made in the ſchool of Chriſt; and that ſhe has learned there to ſubmit to the will of God, and to poſſeſs her ſoul in patience.

W. I am not ſenſible enough of my affliction yet. It ſeems to me as if it were a dream. Is it poſ-

ſible

ſible that my huſband ſhould be dead, and that I ſhould ſee him no more?

M. No, my ſiſter, your huſband is not dead; he is happily paſſed from death unto life. While he was on earth, he lived among ſinful men; he now lives in Heaven with the Angels, and all *the triumphant ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.*

Heb. xii. 23

W. But if the ſoul of my huſband lives in Heaven with Angels and glorified ſpirits, his body is dead; it muſt putrify in the earth, and be reduced to duſt.

M. No, my ſiſter; that very body

body which you mourn for, is not dead. It is fallen aſleep, and our Saviour will *awake* it, when the Archangel's trumpet ſhall ſound. You may ſay of your dear huſband, as Job did of himſelf, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon the earth*; and that, after worms have deſtroyed the poor corpſe, which I have depoſited in the grave, my huſband will riſe in glory and immortality; and in his *fleſh he ſhall ſee* the Divine Redeemer, whom his *eyes ſhall behold* in the glorious manſions of his holineſs.

John xi. 11

Job xix. 25

Ib. 26.

Ib. 27.

W. I could never imagine that I ſhould ſee my huſband die; ſo that

that his death has ſurprized me beyond what I can expreſs to you.

M. Pray, did you think you had married an Angel? Did you not know your huſband was mortal?

W. Yes, Sir; I knew very well I had married a mortal man, and that I was ſubject to death myſelf; but my ailments and indiſpoſitions made me believe I ſhould die firſt, and that my huſband would cloſe my eyes.

M. But—you ſhould have conſidered, that it is God who *has the keys of life and of death* in his hands, who *bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.* He had given you

Rev. i. 18.

1 Sam. ii. 6.

you no aſſurance that your huſband ſhould ſurvive you, and he was under no obligation to keep him alive longer than you.

W. I muſt confeſs to you, Sir, that I was much ſurprized at ſuch a ſeparation, and did by no means expect it. On the contrary, I flattered myſelf with the thought, that it would never happen by that diſtemper.

M. You would not have been ſo much ſurprized, if you had deeply imprinted this in your mind, that we ſhould poſſeſs the things of this world *as though* we *poſſeſſed* them *not*; and that thoſe, who 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30.

have huſbands, ſhould *be, as though they had none.*

W. I had better never have been married, than to have loſt my huſband ſo ſoon, and to find myſelf in ſo melancholy a ſtate of widowhood.

M. My ſiſter, you do not conſider what you ſay, and I excuſe you on account of your trouble. What! You had rather never have had ſuch an excellent huſband, than have enjoyed him ſo few years? Is not this a very ungrateful return to the goodneſs of God, thus to murmur at his depriving us of a bleſſing, which he had beſtowed on us out of mere grace, inſtead of being

being thankful, and praiſing him for the happy time he has granted us the enjoyment of it.

W. Let it be how it will, Sir, I am a woman under the deepeſt affliction, and it is not poſſible to be more ſo. In ſhort, I have no huſband!

M. Do not ſay ſo, my ſiſter. Do you not know that God is the father of orphans, and the huſband of widows? Inſtead of continually repeating in your ſorrow, I have loſt my huſband, ſay rather to your comfort, I have an immortal one, who inhabiteth glorious and everlaſting manſions in Heaven: and that is the Lord Jeſus, *the Prince* Rev. i. 5.

of the Kings of the earth, who, in his infinite compaſſion, has *eſpouſed* me to himſelf for ever. Conſider, my dear ſiſter, that he is not only a living and an immortal ſpouſe, but alſo *exceedingly glorious*, and is almighty and all-good. *Whatſoever* pleaſeth him, *that* doth he *in Heaven and in earth; and in all deep places.* *He* greatly *loveth them that love him*, and his *mercy is from everlaſting to everlaſting.* If you love him with a pure heart, and above all things; if you fear to offend him; if you ſerve him with ardent zeal; and, in a word, if you *worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth*, he will never forſake you. He will not only be always with you,

2 Cor. xi. 2.

Pſ. civ. 1. old tranſ.

Ib. cxxxv. 6.

Prov. viii. 17

Pſ. ciii. 17.

John iv. 24

you, and bleſs you in all you do: but* will take a particular account of your ſighs and tears in his *book of remembrance:* he will ſhed abroad his ſpiritual and heavenly conſolations into your heart; and, when you leave this world, he will receive you to his marriage-feaſt, ſet a crown of glory on your head, and put you in poſſeſſion of fulneſs of joy for ever more.

Pſ. lvi. 8. and Mal. iii. 17.

---

* *Il recevra dans ſon ſein tous vos ſoupirs, &c.---He will receive in his boſom all your ſighs, &c.*

N. B. Mr. Henry has a pretty expreſſion on this ſubject, which the tranſlator begs leave to inſert here---*What was ſown a tear, will come up a pearl.*---See Henry's Expoſition on Pſalm lvi. 8.

W. Truly,

W. Truly, Sir, it is from meditating on theſe truths only, that I muſt ſeek for any comfort or relief: for, as to this world, I can expect nothing from it, but bitterneſs and ſorrow. Like the moon, that has no light but what it borrows from the ſun, I received no joy and content, but from my huſband, and from his wiſe and pious converſation. It is reported of one of the moſt illuſtrious women among the antient heathens, that ſhe refuſed the ſumptuous robes and precious jewels, which were preſented to her from a great King, and ſaid, that ſhe had no need of all theſe things. To which ſhe added this noble expreſſion, *My*

It was Phocion's wife.

ornament

rnament is my huſband. I could without vanity have ſaid the ſame: for I cared not for all the vanities of the world, nor for any of the faſhions of the age. My greateſt pride conſiſted in poſſeſſing a wiſe, virtuous, and exemplary huſband. As he loved me without reſerve, and was always ſtudious to pleaſe me, I loved him alſo moſt heartily, and did all I could to oblige him in every thing.

M. Permit me, my good ſiſter, to remind you of what St. Paul ſays, *She that is married, careth for the things of the world, how ſhe may pleaſe her huſband: but the unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that ſhe may be holy both* 1 Cor. vii. 34

in

in body and in ſpirit. Pity thoſe
1 Tim. v. 6. wanton *widows,* who *live in plea-*
ſure, and are *dead while* they *live;*
for they live only to die eternally;
and all their vain and empty de-
lights will ſoon be turned into ever-
laſting torments. But be you one of
Ib. v. 5. thoſe widows, *that are widows indeed,*
who *truſt in God, and continue in*
ſupplications and prayers night and
day. Inſtead of making ſo many
idle and unprofitable viſits, where
the diſcourſe commonly runs on
vain things, or ſpeaking evil of
others, be careful to viſit the af-
flicted, and to communicate thoſe
conſolations to them, with which
God has been pleaſed to comfort
you: for true piety conſiſts in cha-
ritably

ritably viſiting the diſtreſſed, and in an unblameable life; as St. James tells us, when he ſays, *Pure religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father, is this, To viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction, and to keep himſelf unſpotted from the world.* Be diligent in attending the worſhip of God, and let the *Sabbath of the Lord* be *your delight.* Remember what happened to that holy widow, who *departed not from the temple, but ſerved God with faſtings and prayers night and day.* She had the honour and happineſs of ſeeing the Saviour of the world, and to *ſpeak of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jeruſalem.* If you apply yourſelf

James i. 27.

Iſai. lviii. 13.

Luke ii. 37.

Ibid. v. 38.

to theſe works of piety and charity, and take pleaſure in them, God will not only give you grace to ſee your Lord and Saviour by faith, and to ſpeak of the glorious myſteries of his redemption with a holy joy, but you will receive him alſo into your heart. *He* will *dwell in* you, *and* you *in him*; and *neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, ſhall be able to ſeparate* you from him, nor to break the ſacred bonds of that heavenly union.

John vi. 56

Rom. viii. 38, 39.

W. I know very well, Sir, that what you ſay is according to the will of God, and that I ought to comply with it; but my affliction is

is ſo recent, and ſo great, that I cannot forget it preſently. That may be done in time, and by the means of your good prayers.

M. Time cures all evils of this ſort, even thoſe that are the ſharpeſt and moſt painful. I have known ſome widows, who would receive no comfort; but ſhut their eyes againſt the light, as they did their hearts, to all the conſolations which proceed from Jeſus Chriſt, *the ſun of righteouſneſs*. It ſeemed as if there would never have been any end of their cries and tears; but in proceſs of time, all thoſe violent emotions ſubſided, and joy ſucceeded to pain; inſomuch, that

one could hardly know them again. You ſhould not wait till time moderates your grief, and has that effect on you, which it has on worldly-minded widows. Your piety, and the chriſtian virtues with which you are adorned, give us room to preſume that you will give proofs of your entire ſubmiſſion to the will of God; and will comfort yourſelf in him by meditating on his promiſes, and by the hopes of that glory and happineſs, which is reſerved for us in Heaven, where God has already received the ſoul of the perſon you mourn for. So that we ſhall give glory to God for the good reſolution you will take, and ſhall acknowledge that it is

through

through his Holy Spirit that he has ſhed abroad his comforts in your ſoul: if the wound is ſo deep and ſo painful, that it cannot be healed at once, do not, at leaſt, reject the remedies, which God is graciouſly pleaſed to offer you; but thankfully receive the balm of his Divine conſolations, and pray to the Comforter, *that he may abide with you for ever.* Joh. xiv. 16.

W. Sir, I am ſenſibly affected with your diſcourſe: I find the conſolations, you have been ſo good as to give me, have made a ſtrong impreſſion on my ſoul: inſomuch, that, with regard to my own perſon, I am quite ſtrengthened and com-

comforted; but I am concerned for my diſtreſſed family; and do not know what will become of my poor children.

1 Pet. v. 7. and Pſ. lv. 22. *M. Caſt all your care upon* God, *for he careth for you.* That Father of Mercies, who *ſpared not his own ſon, but delivered him up* to death for you, *how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give* you *all things?* Remember thoſe admirable words, which ſhould fill you with hope and comfort, *Leave thy fatherleſs children, I will preſerve them alive, and let thy widows truſt in me.*

Rom. viii. 32.

Jer. xlix. 11

W. Times are ſo bad, that which way ſoever I look, I ſee nothing but miſery and trouble awaiting my children. *W.*

M. Iſaac was reduced to much greater ſtraits than any of your children can ever be: for he ſaw nothing but the knife that was to kill him, and the fire which was to burn and reduce him to aſhes. And yet, when this ſon ſo beloved of his father, ſaid to him, *My father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?* The poor father anſwered, *My ſon, God will provide himſelf a lamb for a burnt-offering.* Accordingly, *a ram* was found *caught in a thicket by his horns,* which was *offered up for a burnt offering.* Put your truſt in God, and in his adorable Providence; and thoſe things, which appear to you moſt difficult

Gen. xxii. 7

Ib. 8.

Ib. 13.

difficult and perplexing, he will graciouſly be pleaſed to make eaſy and agreeable, by ſuch means as human wiſdom could never foreſee.

W. Such an unexperienced woman as I am, is a poor reſource for fatherleſs children; and there are but few of them, who have a reſpect for their mothers, and are obedient to them.

M. Thank God, you are wiſe and prudent; it is what all thoſe that know you praiſe you for. You are very capable of taking care of a family; and I hope that God will beſtow a plentiful ſhare of his bleſſings amongſt them; and that your children, who are of a good diſpo-

ſition,

ſition, will love and reſpect you the more, becauſe you will be both as father and mother to them. I have known many children, who, though God hath taken their father from them betimes, did yet, by a manifeſt interpoſition from Heaven, thrive and proſper under* the care of their mother.

W. I can hardly think of any thing but my trouble; and if I could take off my mind from it, I am incapable of attending to any ſort of buſineſs, having never been concerned in any but my own little houſehold affairs.

---

* *Sous les ailes.---Under the wings.*

M. Thoſe that know you particularly, have no doubt of your ability. You have beſides, a great many friends, who are capable of giving you good advice, and of aſſiſting you in all your affairs. They will take a pleaſure in ſerving you; and while you apply yourſelf in earneſt to buſineſs, you will be enabled more and more to ſtand to, and ſucceed in it. This is what you ſhould employ yourſelf in*, and not continually brood over your affliction, and thereby irritate and exaſperate it. However, the

* *Et non pas à tenir ſans ceſſe la main ſur votre playe.---And not continually to hold the hand upon your wound.*

chriſtian

chriſtian humility you appear to be poſſeſſed of, and that diffidence, which you have of yourſelf, give me room to hope well of you, and of your conduct. We have known many widows, who fancied themſelves very clever, and were thought to have more ſenſe and underſtanding than their huſbands; and yet, becauſe they preſumed too much on their own ſkill and wiſdom, and would follow their own judgment, or rather their whim and caprice, brought themſelves and family to ruin, and in a ſhort time unfortunately ſquandered away all that their huſbands had left them, and which, for a long time, and for ſeveral years, they had been at a

great deal of trouble to acquire. On the contrary, I have known others, who, having lived in great ſimplicity and true chriſtian humility, and followed the advice of their friends, maintained their families and brought up their children with credit, and even conſiderably increaſed and improved their fortunes. I promiſe myſelf from your extreme goodneſs, and ſingular modeſty, that the ſame thing will happen to you. Put your truſt in God, and you will not be confounded.

W. My huſband was ſo good and ſo godly a man, that I have all the reaſon in the world to hope that God will favour his family with his choiceſt bleſſings. *M.*

M. You may juſtly expect it: r what God ſaith to the Father of e Faithful, belongs to all believers, am thy God, *and will be a God* Gen. xvii. 7. *nto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee*; d you know what he ſays to the oyal Prophet, *The mercy of the* Pſ. ciii. 17. *ord is from everlaſting to everlaſting pon them that fear him; and his ighteouſneſs*, i. e. *the effects of s goodneſs, *unto childrens chil-ren.*

W. †I think myſelf under the

---

* Our commentators render it, *The th of his promiſes.*

† *I'ay des obligations infinies à la me-ire de mon mary.---I have infinite obliga-ns to the memory of my huſband.*

greateſt

greateſt obligations to preſerve
thankful remembrance of my lat
huſband: for he had ſo much re
gard for me, and has given me ſ
many marks of true and ſincer
friendſhip, that I cannot ſufficientl
expreſs the grateful ſenſe I hav
of it.

M. You cannot do a greate
honour to the memory of ſo worth
a huſband, than to imitate his piet
and chriſtian virtues, and to tak
care of your health, that you ma
attend to the education of you
children, who are the fruit of you
conjugal love. Let it be you
care, therefore, to inſtruct them
fear God, and to ſerve him r
ligiouſly; knowing that he wi
ble

eſs the children of ſo excellent a
ther; and water thoſe plants with
e dew of Heaven, that they may
ouriſh, and one day bear fruit to
our comfort and joy: ſo that you
ill have juſt cauſe to ſay, *Behold*
, and the children whom the Lord
ath given me, are for ſigns, and for
onders in Iſrael. Iſai. viii. 18

W. I am heartily deſirous to
ollow your good advice, and pious
xhortations; but I am juſtly diſ-
ident of myſelf, and of my own
trength: therefore, I deſire you,
ir, to pray to God for me, that I
may be ſtrengthened and directed
n all my ways, by his Grace and
Holy Spirit.

THE

THE

MINISTER's PRAYER.

FATHER of Mercies, look with an eye of pity on thy ſervant, who is now kneeling down with us before the throne of thy Divine Majeſty. Thou ſeeſt her deep diſtreſs, and her profound affliction; thou knoweſt whereof we are made, and how weak and frail we are; thou gaveſt her a wiſe and virtuous huſband, who loved her with all poſſible tenderneſs: the years ſhe ſpent in his company ſeemed to her but a few days, becauſe ſhe loved him. She not only loved

loved him as being but *one fleſh* with him, but chiefly becauſe ſhe was animated with the ſame ſpirit, and her zeal and charity were excited by his pious and virtuous example. Thou knoweſt that they mutually lifted up, not only their eyes and hands, but alſo their hearts and affections to Heaven; and that they took a ſingular pleaſure in praiſing and worſhipping thee together *in ſpirit and in truth.* Their greateſt ſatisfaction was to bring up their children in thy knowledge and fear: ſo that their family was as a little church, where the morning and evening ſacrifice were offered up to thee, and thy praiſes were joyfully ſung: But, thou

Gen. ii. 24.

John iv. 24.

great and mighty God, whoſe counſels are *a great deep, which our underſtanding cannot fathom, haſt been pleaſed to break that pleaſant and agreeable bond, which thy ſervant thought to have been ſtronger than death. Thou haſt taken away from her that huſband, whom ſhe loved as her own ſoul, and more than her own life. Seeing part of herſelf is in Heaven, ſhe rather wiſheth that the other ſhould be there alſo; and in the extremity of her anguiſh ſhe has unadviſedly ſpoken, and ſaid as thy Prophet Elijah once did, *It is enough, now, O Lord, take away my life.* Father

1 Kings xix. 4.

* *Des abîmes.*

of

of Mercies, forgive the exceſs of her affliction, and the vehemence of her grief. Give her grace to ſet her mind on things above, and and to place all her hopes in Heaven: and grant, that with an eye of faith ſhe may behold her dear huſband, in the company of Angels, clothed with light and glory, and drinking *of the ever-flowing river of thy pleaſures.* As a proof that ſhe truly loved him, we pray ſhe may prefer the joy and felicity he is now poſſeſſed of, to the ſatisfaction ſhe might receive by ſeeing him again in this vale of tears: and eſpecially, that ſhe may behold, with the ſame faith, that heavenly huſband, who holds the

Pſ. xxxvi. 8.

Rev. i. 18. *keys of* life *and of death* in his hands, and has an abſolute power over all men, and angels, both good and evil. Could the huſband ſhe mourns Eccl. ix. 6. for have *any more a portion in any thing that is done under the ſun*, and be a witneſs of her affliction and grief, he could neither aſſuage her pain, nor wipe away her tears: but that Divine Spouſe ſo reigneth and triumpeth in Heaven, that he is with us by his ſpirit, and will be with us to the end of the world. Grant ſhe may have a full aſſurance, that this Heavenly Spouſe will not only be always with her, and bleſs and proſper the work of her hands; but that he will even dwell in her heart, be unto her an

inexhauſtible

inexhauſtible ſource of comfort and joy, and make her *in all things more than a conqueror*. O God of all conſolation, who didſt multiply the poor widow's oil, and ſupply her with the means of paying her huſband's debt, and of ſupporting herſelf, and all her family; be graciouſly pleaſed alſo to multiply in the behalf of thy ſervant, the precious oil of thy bleſſing, and to make her able and willing to relieve the wants and neceſſities of her family. Grant alſo, that ſhe may be one of thoſe *widows indeed*, who place all their hope and all their truſt in thee, who ſerve thee religiouſly, and take pleaſure in works of charity and mercy. Let it be her chief care to bring up her children

Rom. viii. 37.

2 Kings iv. 1, 2, &c. to the 8th verſe

1 Tim. v. 3

dren in thy fear, and in the obedience of thy Holy Commandments. Thou, O God of Truth, wilt take care of the children of thy ſervant, who loved thee with all his heart, and feared nothing in the world ſo much as to offend thee, nor deſired any thing more ardently than to obey thy laws. Thou wilt fulfil in him that which thou didſt promiſe to the Father of the Faithful; *I will be a God unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee*: and will manifeſt how true the Prophet's ſaying is, that *the mercy of the Lord is from everlaſting to everlaſting upon them that fear him; and his righteouſneſs unto children's children.* Give thy ſervant grace to rely on the truth of thy promiſes, which are more

Gen. xvii. 7.

Pſ. ciii. 17.

more firm than Heaven and earth; and let her be convinced, that while ſhe inſtructs her children to ſerve and fear thee, and ſets before them an example of piety and chriſtian virtue, ſhe ſhall ſee them grow up in thy houſe as bleſſed plants. Enlighten, we beſeech thee, theſe tender plants with thy Divine Light. Water them with the dew of Heaven, and make them ſo flouriſh in grace and ſpiritual gifts, that they may yield the fruits of righteouſneſs to thy glory, and the edification of their neighbours. Vouchſafe to fill them with that thankful love and obedience, which they owe to her, by whoſe means thou haſt brought them into the world. Finally, grant that they may one day be her glory,

her

her joy, and her crown of rejoicing; that ſhe may have cauſe to ſay, *Behold, I, and the children whom the*
Iſ. viii. 18. *Lord hath given me, are for ſigns, and for wonders in Iſrael. O Lord,*
Dan. ix. 19. *hear, O Lord, forgive,* Lord have mercy, and give us a due ſenſe of thine infinite goodneſs, and ſeal to us the truth of thy promiſes, that
Pſ. lxviii. 5. thou wilt be *a father of the fatherleſs, and* an huſband *of the widows,* the comforter of the afflicted, the protector of them that truſt in thee, and call upon thee, in the name and for the ſake of the infinite merits of the death of thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt; to whom with thee, and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever more. Amen.

6/-

4487 aaa 18